

TRIP TO SEVIER THEN UP PROVO RIVER

William realized how short food and other supplies were and knew that something had to be done. He decided to go to Southern California.

In February 1848, William and his son, John, started for California with two horses and a mule. At the Sevier river they met a mountaineer named Baker.

"It is impossible for you to get through," Baker said, "because the Indians are hostile, I think it would be much better plan if you went east."

"Which way do you suggest?" asked William.

"You can reach Fort Bridger by going up Provo canyon."

"That sounds good to me," William said, "and we'll be able to see new areas which can be used for communities."

William thanked Baker for his advice, said their goodbyes, and started back to the Provo river and followed it up through Provo Canyon, the real beginning of their trip to Missouri. He had to have food and supplies for his family, whether from California or Missouri. So they went East hoping to find work and still thinking it will leave more food for the family they left behind, (at least two less mouths to eat).

The weather had been mild but as they approached Fort Bridger a cold winter storm struck with a fury, then extreme cold settled in. They remained in Fort Bridger until spring. While at Fort Bridger their two horses were stolen. Spring arrived and they continued their journey East, walking all the way, taking turns leading the mule. They had some terrible times as they crossed the plains.

As they made their way along the Platt River, William remembered that his brother, Robert, had buried a son who had been run over by an ox-team and watch for signs of the grave. William located the grave and found that wolves had dug into the grave and scattered the bones. William re-buried the bones before going on.

The weather during the winter had not improved the wagon trail. At one time they had to swim the Platt River while the ice was floating thick in the water. Some streams, they waded through, the water was up to their necks. For several days at a time they could get nothing to eat but rose bush berries, then William killed a wolf, then some more wolves and they got along pretty well after that.

Although hardships and difficulties beset their way, they reached their destination at last and obtained employment in a packing plant, and stayed nearly two years. They boarded at the home of Mr. Parks, the father of Aunt Jane Gardner.

William bought some horses and a wagon, then loaded the wagon with provisions and returned to the Salt Lake Valley with another wagon train of immigrants. William found his family living in Millcreek with the rest of the Gardners.

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